

NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

July 20, 2005

A meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) was held on Wednesday, July 20, 2005, in the Nevada County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 950 Maidu Avenue, Nevada City, California. The meeting was scheduled for 8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Nate Beason, Patti Ingram, Josh Susman, *Robin Sutherland, **Conley Weaver

Members Absent: Tim Brady and Russ Steele

Staff Present: Dan Landon, Executive Director; Nancy Holman, Administrative Services Officer; Michael Woodman, Transportation Planner; Toni Perry, Administrative Assistant

Standing Orders: Chairman Ingram convened the Nevada County Transportation Commission meeting at 8:32 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

[Note: The Commission started the meeting with review of the Consent Items and the Caltrans Report, to allow Tom Brannon to leave early to attend an important meeting in Sacramento.]

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

1. Financial Reports:

A. May and June 2005

Executive Director Landon explained the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee (RTMF) #328 report to the Commissioners. Commissioner Beason asked when RTMF money is allocated, is it strictly on the basis of projects in a particular jurisdiction or is there a formula? Mr. Landon explained how the RTMF expenditure plan was developed and how it is updated. In response to a second question from Commissioner Beason, Mr. Landon described the procedure that was used to establish a "nexus" between the RTMF projects and new development.

2. Correspondence:

F. Memo from Citizens Concerned About Traffic (CCAT) - Special meeting on Nevada County Road Issues - Need for Dorsey Drive Interchange. 5/23/05, File 1030.3.2.1.

I. Letter from Barbara Kuvet to the NCTC - Request for solutions at three intersections in western Nevada County. 6/14/05, File 1200.4.

P. City of Grass Valley - Resolution supporting the construction of the Dorsey Drive interchange. 7/7/05, File 1030.3.2.1.

Executive Director Landon highlighted that NCTC received several letters from citizens and citizen groups and the City of Grass Valley who support and have concern for the Dorsey Drive

Interchange, which is NCTC's number one priority. Mr. Landon also mentioned the letter from Barbara Kuvet who requested consideration for three intersections within western Nevada County. He expressed pleasure at receiving letters from the citizens of the County and encouraged them to be a part of NCTC's planning efforts.

3. Executive Director's Report

3.1 Dorsey Drive Interchange

Executive Director Landon reported he spoke to Jody Jones, Caltrans District 3 Director, on June 27th and noted to her that with the recent appointment of Winder Bajwa as the new Project Manager for Nevada County projects, and with the fact that NCTC and Caltrans are preparing for the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), this would be an excellent time to refocus efforts on the Commission's number one project, the Dorsey Drive Interchange. Ms. Jones agreed with Mr. Landon and he reported they spoke about the idea of building a partial interchange with the funds available. She indicated that she is willing to consider a phased construction approach as long as three issues were addressed:

1. Safety.
2. That the phases make sense to motorists utilizing the facility.
3. A "guaranteed" source of revenue with a reasonable timeframe that will complete construction of the entire project.

Also, on June 28th Mr. Landon met with the City of Grass Valley and shared Ms. Jones comments and the City Council passed a resolution declaring support of the project. He reported that at the same City Council meeting a local resident, Jack Kramer, announced a grassroots campaign to encourage the State to fully fund the Dorsey Drive Interchange "now".

Commissioner Beason questioned if the project is designed with two ramps, would that lessen the enthusiasm at the State level to complete the project. Executive Director Landon responded that as a follow-up of Tom Brannon's earlier comments, at the staff level of Caltrans there will be more of an impetus to complete the project than if nothing was started.

*Robin Sutherland arrived at 9:30 a.m.

3.2 Grass Valley Corridor Improvement Project (GVCIP)

Executive Director Landon reviewed the project status and stated that, during the first two weeks of August, Grant Johnson of PRISM Engineering will be doing traffic flow analysis at the intersections adjacent to the Idaho-Maryland/East Main Street intersection, so there will be a basis for the assumptions to be used for traffic flow through that intersection. He said Bickett Engineering, Inc. is refining the design and is pressing forward to get the Project Study Report completed.

3.3 Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee Program Update

Executive Director Landon stated that staff is working to resolve questions that came up at the last Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting, and also at a meeting with the Nevada County Contractors' Association (NCCA). He expects to have a revised update completed in the near future so it can be reviewed by NCTC and member agencies.

3.4 Air Quality Conformity Overview

Executive Director Landon reported that Michael Woodman, NCTC's Transportation Planner, is leading Nevada County and several other counties through the process of air quality conformity and working with the Federal Highways and EPA. He indicated the Sacramento area is currently under federal lapse for utilization of funding on transportation projects and expects to be under the lapse for the next eight months. Because Nevada County was designated as a non-attainment area separate from Sacramento, NCTC is not affected by the lapse of federal funds.

3.5 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update

Executive Director Landon explained that NCTC is in the process of updating the RTP, which is a twenty-year plan for the community. A "Notice of Preparation" has been circulated to other agencies to get their comments for the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The State is delaying the fund estimate for the 2006 STIP until the end of September, so this may delay completion of the Regional Transportation Plan Financial Element.

4. Caltrans District 3:

- A. Project Status Report: Tom Brannon and Winder Bajwa, Caltrans Project Manager for Nevada County.

Tom Brannon, of Caltrans, introduced Winder Bajwa as the new Caltrans Project Manager for Nevada County projects.

Mr. Brannon gave the following brief summary of project activity that has occurred since the last NCTC meeting.

- *SR 49 Bear River to Wolf/Combie Road Widening* – Mr. Brannon stated that he has to give Executive Director Landon final accounting numbers for the cost of constructing this project.
- *SR 89/I-80 Town of Truckee Dual Roundabouts* – The retaining wall change has been approved and construction is ongoing.
- *Dorsey Drive Interchange* – Mr. Brannon met with Caltrans Environmental staff and R/W mapping has been delivered to the proper functional units so they can proceed with their work. The Environmental staff have stated they are on schedule, which includes completion of the draft Environmental Document by December 2005, and final approval of the Environmental Document and completion of the Project Approval and Environmental Documentation (PA/ED) in July 2006. There are several alternative designs proposed for Dorsey Drive in terms of how much of the project can be built with available dollars. The full four-leg interchange design is not within the realm of possibility with the dollars available. In a meeting with the City of Grass Valley, a proposal was discussed to build the southerly two legs of the project and not buy R/W on the northerly side, but use those dollars to construct both southerly ramps. Mr. Brannon stated that to get Caltrans to approve that kind of proposal, the City must commit to not allow future development in the two northerly quadrants until those ramps can be constructed.

Commissioner Beason asked what the total amount of money needed is to construct the full Dorsey Drive Interchange. Executive Director Landon responded that in December

2004 we were \$11 million short. Winder Bajwa stated Caltrans is in the process of reworking the construction and R/W estimates for Dorsey Drive. Commissioner Beason also questioned if a waiver on the height of the overpass could be given so it would not have to be raised to sixteen feet. Executive Director Landon mentioned he is researching the Caltrans height standard to determine if it is possible to renegotiate the height of the overpass with Caltrans. Commissioner Beason also questioned if an additional traffic study would need to be conducted for the Brunswick Basin if only two ramps were built. Tom Brannon thought the current study could be used.

Commissioner Beason noted the relationship between the development of the Loma Rica Ranch property, the construction of the Dorsey Drive Interchange, and the need to improve the Brunswick Road/Idaho-Maryland intersection. He expressed concern that the intersection may become increasingly unsafe if the community has to wait for the Loma Rica Ranch to be developed and Dorsey Drive Interchange to be constructed before the intersection is improved. He also has heard from the public about the intersection at Nevada City Highway and Brunswick and he has growing concerns about the ability of public officials to work through some of the conditions related to approving the project to improve the safety of driving in Nevada County. Commissioner Beason has asked Nevada County Department of Transportation and Sanitation (DOTS) staff to look at potential improvements to the Brunswick Road/Idaho-Maryland intersection with the assumption that there is no Loma Rica Ranch development, in order to find a way to improve the intersection as soon as possible. Chairman Ingram noted the opportunity to discuss these issues at the upcoming joint planning meeting on August 15th with the Grass Valley City Council, Nevada County Board of Supervisors, and the NCTC.

Commissioner Weaver made a comment about the latest EIR on Deer Creek Park II and stated that Nevada City has engaged a consultant to give them recommendations and advice. He said they would be pressuring for alternate egress from that project, which could mean there will be more traffic eventually at the Idaho-Maryland/Brunswick Road intersection.

Commissioner Susman noted, from a planning standpoint, that construction of transportation improvements need to be coordinated with the amount of traffic each development will generate. An example he shared was Truckee's General Plan, which stated there would be no discretionary development on SR 267 from downtown Truckee to Kings Beach until the bypass was built.

Commissioner Beason mentioned traffic studies being done for Loma Rica Ranch and the potential Crestview Interchange. He questioned if there was a comprehensive traffic study for western Nevada County that would pull all the various pieces together. Executive Director Landon replied that the NCTC's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a comprehensive document that uses City and County General Plans to plan for long-term improvements.

- *Truckee Bypass Mitigation Planting* – In response to a question from Commissioner Susman, Tom Brannon stated that the job has been awarded and planting should start soon.

- B. SR 49 at the LaBarr Meadows Road Intersection: Presentation by Tom Brannon, Chief, Office of Project Management B.

Tom Brannon gave a brief history of the project and how this section of SR 49 was chosen in the last STIP cycle as the first segment of highway from Combie Road to Grass Valley to be planned for widening, so the funds would not be lost. Funding originally designated to conduct an environmental study and to complete a design of the entire corridor will be used toward the construction of this project. This section of highway was chosen first due to multiple accidents in the area. He stated there had been three public meetings held by Caltrans to discuss this project, that all three were well attended and the public accepted the project. Even the property owners whose property would be affected by the construction were in favor of the proposed plan.

Mr. Brannon explained the display board showing the proposed intersection improvements, which would include a signal and collector frontage roads for the numerous driveways feeding into the signalized intersection to access SR 49, and outlined funding for the project. Executive Director Landon added that an Environmental Document will be completed in July 2006, the R/W effort would begin 2006/07 and completed by 2008/09, with construction starting in June/July of 2008 and running for two years.

Vern Gross, a member of the public, questioned if Caltrans has looked at the possible impacts of traffic on La Barr Meadows Road and Allison Ranch Road during and after construction, with the assumption that traffic may be diverted onto Allison Ranch Road. Mr. Gross was concerned about the safety issues of increased traffic on this one lane road with a one lane bridge, or on Old Auburn Road. Mr. Brannon responded that during construction, at peak hour periods, Caltrans would have two lanes of traffic open. During the off-peak hours one lane would be open with flag control. There will not be a policy to divert traffic onto Allison Ranch Road. Executive Director Landon noted that when the climbing lane at Alta Sierra Drive was constructed, most of the work was done at night.

Susan Healy-Harman, a member of the public, questioned if a sign with a display indicating vehicular speed, like the one currently on Brunswick Road at the Idaho-Maryland Road intersection, could be placed at the La Barr Meadows Road intersection to slow down drivers through that area until construction is done. Tom Brannon stated they could take that request back to Caltrans' Traffic Department.

Jerry Mehran, a member of the public, posed a question to Bill Derrick, Gold Country Stage Transit Manager, what effect this construction would have on Route 5 buses. Bill Derrick responded that this improvement would be beneficial since the Transit Services Division would like to establish two bus stops with pedestrian crossing facilities in the vicinity of La Barr Meadows Road. These new stops would eliminate the need for the bus to travel in and out of the mobile home parks.

At the end of Tom Brannon's report, Chairman Ingram read and presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Mr. Brannon acknowledging his service and achievements during his three years as Project Manager to Nevada County.

CONSENT ITEMS:

5. Certificate of Appreciation: Tom Brannon. *Authorized Chairman to sign certificate.*
6. NCTC Minutes: May 18, 2005. *Approved.*
7. Allocation Request from Gold Country Telecare: *Approved Resolution 05-29 to allocate \$23,540 from Community Transit Services Funds to Gold Country Telecare, Inc. for vehicles and communications equipment in FY 2005/06.*

8. Allocation Request from the City of Grass Valley: *Approved Resolution 05-30 to allocate \$305,170 of Local Transportation Funds to Grass Valley for transit/paratransit operations in FY 2005/06.*
9. Allocation Request from Nevada County: *Approved Resolution 05-31 to allocate \$1,577,754 of Local Transportation Funds to the County of Nevada from Local Transportation Funds for transit/paratransit operations, and an allocation of \$98,663 from Community Transit Services Funds for operations of paratransit services for FY 2005/06.*
10. Allocation Request from the Town of Truckee: *Approved Resolution 05-32 to allocate \$391,078 to the Town of Truckee from Local Transportation Funds for transit/paratransit operations for FY 2005/06.*
11. Allocation Request from the City of Nevada City: *Approved Resolution 05-33 to allocate \$71,565 to Nevada City from Local Transportation Funds for transit/paratransit operations for FY 2005/06.*
12. Disposal of Surplus Equipment: *Approve Resolution 05-34 to dispose of surplus Intel Pentium III 256 computer, monitor, keyboard, and mouse.*

Commissioner Weaver made a motion to approve the consent items. Commissioner Susman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS:

13. An Addition to NCTC's Policies and Procedures Manual

Executive Director Landon explained that the addition to the NCTC Policies and Procedures Manual was based on comments from the Commission and their concern of utilization of staff time on traffic analyses for private development projects. Staff proposed to include a 5% administrative fee on any traffic studies for private development projects that are managed by NCTC staff. Commissioner Beason and Commissioner Susman expressed support for Mr. Landon's efforts on this matter.

Commissioner Beason made a motion to adopt Resolution 05-35 authorizing the inclusion of Section 108.0.1 Contract Administration Fee, into the NCTC's Policies and Procedures Manual. Commissioner Susman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Paul O'Sullivan, Executive Vice President for Catlin Properties and developer for the Bear River Mill Site, stated he would be willing to have the fee be retroactive to pay for the time Executive Director Landon has spent on their traffic study.

14. Local Funding Options for Regional Transportation Improvements

Executive Director Landon stated as a result of the May NCTC meeting, staff was directed to develop some next steps with regard to local funding options for transportation projects. He reported on the work that staff has done on this issue of local funding. Mr. Landon recommended that NCTC consider conducting a public opinion survey of transportation needs within the County and determine the viability of a sales tax measure to generate funding for transportation improvements. He estimated that the survey would cost approximately \$30,000 and stated that NCTC has sufficient funds to pay for this effort.

Commissioner Beason asked if this would be focused just on Dorsey Drive. Executive Director Landon responded it was not just for Dorsey Drive and noted that it needs to be oriented at gaining voter support by directing questions toward what the community wants and what they would be willing to fund. Commissioner Beason questioned if the sales tax measure would be the only source of funding or if there would be other viable options such as a local vehicle license fee. Mr. Landon responded that two years ago NCTC funded a study to look at all the options and the sales tax measure appeared to be the most viable means of obtaining revenues.

Commissioner Weaver stated Nevada City has a problem with this approach because they are considering a local sales tax focused on road improvements within their incorporated area. He said it would be difficult for them to support two separate tax measures. Mr. Landon replied that in Lake and Mendocino Counties the polling was oriented to individual cities and their priority issues, so the measure could have local components for local projects as well as regional projects. Commissioner Weaver mentioned that Commissioner Susman's presentation at the May meeting, with regard to Truckee's success with a local sales tax, is their impetus to pursue similar action.

Commissioner Beason asked if the State of California would feel they were "off the hook" if the community took local action to fund projects. Mr. Landon responded it was his opinion that there would not be any lessening of desire for improvement. On the State level there has been an inability to increase the gas tax and neither the State nor the Federal government have provided the revenues to improve major State and local facilities in Nevada County. Commissioner Beason asked for clarification of the statistic that 85% of the State population live in an area with a local sales tax. Mr. Landon responded 85% of the State population reside in the twenty counties that have sales tax measures in place.

Commissioner Susman stated that the Town of Truckee would consider making this a countywide measure, depending on the language of the document and the benefit to each region within the county, and would then retire their current sales tax initiative. Executive Director Landon noted that in the current assumptions a 1/4-cent sales tax, with 50% of that going to local maintenance issues, would retire the funding gap that has been identified.

Bill Derrick mentioned that his employment prior to his position in Nevada County was in Santa Barbara County where he was responsible for administering a sales tax program which provided additional funding for transit and paratransit services. He stated he would be interested in what was found out through the polling with regard to public support for transit and other alternative transportation. In response to Commissioner Beason's question if this measure would let Caltrans off the hook, Mr. Derrick stated his experience was that when you have a local funding mechanism, a community gains leverage in terms of moving Caltrans projects forward by contributing funds towards those projects.

Commissioner Susman made a motion to direct staff to develop a Request for Proposal to conduct a public opinion survey of transportation needs and a potential sales tax measure in Nevada County, and to prepare an amendment to the Overall Work Program, utilizing up to \$30,000 of NCTC planning funds for the consultant's contract. Commissioner Sutherland seconded the motion.

Commissioner Weaver stated he would be voting no on this motion because at this point it would look to be in conflict or would hinder what Nevada City is trying to do, which is on a fast track.

Commissioner Beason asked if there was the possibility with the Town of Truckee to sunset one measure and bring in the other. Commissioner Susman stated that would be part of the consideration.

The motion passed four-to-one; Commissioner Weaver voted no.

Commissioner Susman encouraged various jurisdiction staffs to work with the NCTC staff to create an agreeable scope for the proposal so all the individual needs are met.

The Commission took a break from 9:55 a.m. until 9:59 a.m. **Commissioner Weaver did not return from the break until after the conclusion of the NCTC meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jerry Mehran, a member of the public, brought up a bus stop issue directed to Bill Derrick about Route 11 and a stop at Gold and Squirrel Creek. Bill Derrick stated he would be happy to discuss this issue with Jerry privately.

COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Commissioner Susman announced that June 30th they had the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Agricultural Inspection Station off of I-80. He stated they will be moving out of downtown Truckee and east of town towards Reno, close to the location of the CHP scales, and this should alleviate a major bottleneck. He said they do not have plans to staff the station yet, but it is a beautiful \$12 million facility.

Commissioner Beason stated he is looking forward to the joint meeting between the Board of Supervisors and the Grass Valley City Council, and he is hopeful that they will establish some goals and milestones based on agreed data and move forward with mutually agreed upon concepts.

Chairman Ingram reported two ribbon-cutting ceremonies with one being at Ralphs Grocery Store for their police department, and the other being the groundbreaking for the new Goldminers Inn to be constructed off of Bank Street in downtown Grass Valley.

Chairman Ingram asked Executive Director Landon to highlight the Crestview Workshop on July 21st from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Love Building in Condon Park. Mr. Landon reviewed for the public the role of NCTC as facilitator for the Crestview Intersection/Interchange Study. He explained that the study deals with location and type of transportation facilities, and is not considering the appropriateness of the land use or the developments. He stated those issues will be covered by the Grass Valley Planning Commission and City Council at a future time. The workshop is to present to the community the Project Development Team's recommendation as to the location and type of interchange facility. The final report will be presented to the City of Grass Valley for evaluation of land use and potential approval of the North Star and South Hill Village developments.

NONAGENDIZED ITEM:

Commissioner Beason requested staff agendize for discussion the idea of having a Commission meeting every month versus the current schedule of meeting every other month.

SCHEDULE FOR NEXT MEETING:

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 21, 2005 at 8:30 a.m., at the Grass Valley City Council Chambers, 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley, CA.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Chairman Ingram adjourned the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: _____
Antoinette Perry, Administrative Assistant

Approved on: _____

By: _____
Patti Ingram, Chairman
Nevada County Transportation Commission